

CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES

TEACHERS, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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INTEREST AREA
SOCIAL



WHAT DOES AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER DO?

What children learn and experience during their early years can shape their views of themselves and the world, and affect later success or failure in school, work, and their personal lives. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS educate California's children. Most instruct a group of between 20 and 34 children at a single grade level ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade. When several grades are grouped together, teaching teams often share responsibility with each Teacher handling a different subject area.

Elementary School Teachers, with the help of instructional aides and parent volunteers, work with individual children, small groups, or with the class as a whole. On a day-to-day basis, they perform the following tasks:

- Teach students through lecture and visual presentation.

- Teach core subjects, such as math, science, or social studies.
- Use computers, television, projectors, and other materials.
- Prepare course objectives and outline for course of study, following curriculum guidelines or requirements of State and school.
- Prepare, administer, and correct tests, and record results.
- Assign lessons, correct homework, and hear oral presentations.
- Teach rules of conduct and maintain discipline and suitable learning environment in classroom and on playground.
- Evaluate student performance and discuss pupil academic and behavioral attitudes and achievements with parents.
- Keep attendance and grade records and prepare reports as required by school.
- Counsel pupils when adjustment and academic problems arise.
- Take part in faculty and professional meetings, conferences, and Teacher training courses.
- Supervise outdoor and indoor play activities.
- Select, store, order, issue, and keep count of classroom equipment and supplies.

Some Elementary School Teachers instruct classes in one subject only, such as music, art, or physical education.

A growing number of Teachers specialize in the education of children with special needs such as non-English speaking children or children who have been identified with speech delays. Some specialists instruct students in separate classes or schools. Others are Resource Teachers who work with children individually, consult with classroom Teachers, or coordinate special education programs.

WHAT SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT?

Important skills, knowledge, and abilities for Elementary School Teachers include:

- Instructing – Teaching others how to do something.
- Learning Strategies – Selecting and using training/instructional methods and procedures appropriate for the situation when learning or teaching new things.
- Reading Comprehension – Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents.
- Social Perceptiveness – Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
- Active Listening – Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- Oral Expression – The ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- Written Expression – The ability to communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
- Speech Clarity – The ability to speak clearly so others can understand you.
- Education and Training – Knowledge of principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
- English Language – Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Psychology – Knowledge of human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
- Mathematics – Knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.

Elementary Teachers need enthusiasm, creativity, and patience. Teaching strategies place particular emphasis on such qualities as respect for individual differences, ability to work closely with others, and classroom management skills.

WHAT'S THE WORK ENVIRONMENT?

State law specifies 175 teaching days as the minimum school year. In addition, Teachers put in a great deal of non-teaching time. They organize and plan lessons, evaluate student progress, work with children who require extra help, and confer with parents and resource staff. Teachers are also expected to attend and participate in faculty meetings, educational workshops, and parent-teacher activities.

Union Membership

Most Teachers belong to the California Teachers Association or the American Federation of Teachers. Teachers in each district usually select one group to represent them in collective bargaining.

WHAT'S THE CALIFORNIA JOB OUTLOOK?

The following information is from the occupational projections produced by the Employment Development Department (EDD) Labor Market Information Division (LMID):

Estimated number of workers in 2000:	179,000
Estimated number of workers in 2010:	223,700
Projected Growth 2000-2010:	25%
Est. openings due to separations by 2010:	45,800

These figures do not include self-employment.

The number of Elementary School Teachers will grow by over 50,000 in California over the next ten years, ranking it among the top fifty largest growth occupations (new jobs) in California. The growth rate in percent is faster than average compared with all occupations in the ten-year period.

In addition to the new jobs created, public and private schools will fill 53,600 openings between 2000 and 2010 as Teachers retire or change careers.

The California Class Size Reduction Program, approved and enacted in 1996, caused a dramatic increase in the number of Elementary School Teacher positions, as most schools elected to reduce their kindergarten, first, and second grade classes to 20 students. According to the California Department of Education, 23,500 new elementary school teaching positions have been created in California since the 1996/97 school years as a result of the legislation.

The demand for Elementary School Teachers is high in most areas of California, particularly in remote rural areas and in poorer urban communities. Also in demand are Teachers who specialize in the areas of bilingual/cross cultural, early childhood, and special education. In addition, there is a critical shortage of Substitute Teachers in most areas of the State.

WHAT DOES THE JOB PAY?

California Earnings

Salaries vary between school districts and generally are based on experience, size of district, and college units completed. Some districts pay bonuses for advanced degrees or extra duty. Private schools pay somewhat less, but Teachers may be compensated with free tuition for their own children and greater independence in the classroom.

Public Elementary School Teachers 2000-2001 Annual Wages

Beginning Range:	\$32,843	to	\$35,222
Mid-Range:	\$48,682	to	\$57,707
Highest Range:	\$55,974	to	\$70,135

Source: California Department of Education.

The Occupational Employment Survey of Employers by EDD/LMID for wages in 2002 shows the average annual wage for Elementary School Teachers in California is \$48,850.

Substitute Teachers are paid on a daily rate, their wages varying from school district to school district. Generally, current daily rates range from \$70 to \$125 per day. Due to the severe shortage of Substitute Teachers in California, daily rates are on the rise in California, with a few employers offering as much as \$200 per day. In addition,

Retired Teachers who return to the district as Substitute Teachers are often given a significantly higher daily rate, (or differential), sometimes as much as 30 percent higher than non-retirees.

Hours

Teachers in most elementary schools work a minimum of six hours a day in the classroom for a nine-month school year. Some districts have year-round schedules where Teachers work for 45 days followed by 15 days off, throughout the year. Teachers work many additional hours per week planning lessons, grading assignments and tests, conferring with parents and Resource Teachers, and participating in Parent Teacher Association activities. They also attend continuing education classes and seminars to qualify for credential renewal.

Benefits

Both public and private schools almost always provide medical, dental, vacation, sick leave, retirement, and insurance benefits.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THE JOB?

Education and Training

Elementary School Teachers must get a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential in order to teach several subjects in one classroom such as those found in elementary schools. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (or Commission) establishes requirements for a Preliminary and Professional Clear Credential to teach in California's public classrooms. The following requirements are for those who plan to prepare in California.

Preliminary (Five-Year) Credential

Requirements of the Preliminary Credential are:

- Bachelors or higher degree.
- Approved professional preparation program including successful student teaching with a minimum Grade Point Average of 2.0.
- California Basic Education Test (CBEST) passage, with a score of at least 41 in each of the three parts, or a total score of at least 123.

- U.S. Constitution education course.
- Completion of the Developing English Language Skills, including reading instruction course.
- Subject-Matter Competence – able to verify knowledge on multiple subjects, either verified by taking the Praxis Multiple Subject Assessment for Teachers test, or by completing a Commission-approved liberal arts subject matter program in an approved program.
- Passage of the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) test.

The Preliminary Credential is issued for a maximum of five years. If requirements for the Professional Clear Credential are not completed within those five years, the holder will be unable to teach in the public schools of California on that credential until those requirements are met and the document renewed.

Professional Clear (Five-Year) Credential

Requirements to receive the Professional Clear Credential are as follows:

- Fifth year post-graduate work (additional 30 units) completed in a Commission-approved California institute of higher education.
- One health education course.
- One special education course.
- One computer education course.

In an effort to fill the demand for Teachers, the California State University system recently re-designed and shortened its teaching curriculum to allow students the option of completing their five-year credential requirements in just over four years. Additionally, an “Early Deciders” program has been started for freshmen and sophomores who plan to enter elementary school (multiple subject) teaching programs that involves “blending” teaching methods with core subject material-coursework that was previously reserved for senior and fifth year students.

For those interested in substitute teaching, contact the Commission for information on the Emergency 30-day Substitute Teaching Permit, Emergency Substitute Teaching Permit for Prospective Teachers, or Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permits, all whose requirements vary.

Specific requirements for the above permits can be found at the Commission address listed at the end of this guide.

Licensing and Certification

Beginning in the fall of 1999, the \$55 credential fee was waived for first-time applicants to encourage more people to enter the teaching field. Additional fees exist for specific subject credentials, scoring reports, and fingerprint clearance, which can amount to more than \$200. Fingerprinting is required by the licensing agency, as well as many school districts. Credential renewals are \$55.

The 2001-2002 Budget Act of California appropriated \$1.6 million to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to waive the \$55 application fee for first-time applicants of multiple subject, single subject, special education and specialist credentials. The fee waiver applies to both California-trained applicants and Teachers trained outside of California.

Continuing Education

Credentials are renewed every five years. During that time, Teachers must take 150 hours of continuing education and staff development, and teach at least one half of one year.

HOW DO I FIND THE JOB?

Direct application to school districts remains one of the most effective job search methods. In addition, college placement offices on campus are valuable resources for job finding and are recommended to all teaching students. The California Department of Education publishes both the Public School Directory and the Private School Directory, which together contain a listing of all schools and school districts in the state of California. They can be found in public libraries and career centers, or may be ordered by calling (800) 995-4099.

California job openings can be found at various online job-listing systems including CalJOBSSM at www.caljobs.ca.gov or at America's Job Bank at www.ajb.dni.us.

For other occupational and wage information and a listing of the largest employers in any county, visit the Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Web page at www.calmis.ca.gov. Find further job search assistance at your nearest Job Service office at www.edd.ca.gov/jsloc.htm or the closest One-Stop site listed on the California WorkNet site at www.sjtcc.ca.gov/sjtccweb/one-stop.

WHERE CAN THIS JOB LEAD?

Promotion for most Teachers consists of regular salary increases. Administrative positions require teaching experience, advanced study, and additional credentials.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
1900 Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 944270
Sacramento, CA 94244-2700
(916) 445-7254
(888) 921-2682
www.ctc.ca.gov

California Teachers Association
P.O. Box 921
Burlingame, CA 94011-0921
(650) 697-1400
www.cta.org

California Department of Education
1430 N Street
P.O. Box 944272
Sacramento, CA 94244-2720
(916) 319-0791
www.cde.ca.gov

Employment Projections by Occupation
www.calmis.ca.gov/htmlfile/subject/occproj.htm

Employment and Wages by Occupation
[www.calmis.ca.gov/file/occup\\$/OES\\$.htm](http://www.calmis.ca.gov/file/occup$/OES$.htm)

RELATED OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES

Teachers, Secondary School	No. 57
Teachers, Special Education	No. 110
Instructors, Community College	No. 139
Teachers, Preschool	No. 275
Teachers, Trade and Technical	No. 404
Counselors, Rehabilitation and School	No. 429
Teachers of English as a Second Language	No. 556

OCCUPATIONAL CODE REFERENCES

SOC (*Standard Occupational Classification*)
Elementary School Teachers, Except
Special Education 25-2021

O*NET (*Occupational Information Network*)
Elementary School Teachers, Except
Special Education 25-2021.00

OES (*Occupational Employment Statistics*)
Teachers, Elementary School 31305

DOT (*Dictionary of Occupational Titles*)
Teacher, Elementary School 092.227-010